

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Claims 1-41 (canceled).

42. (new) A laminated photovoltaic module that exhibits no loss in electrical photovoltaic performance after 1000 hours of exposure to 85% RH/85°C damp heat and after 20 cycles of change of conditions between 85%RH/85°C and 0%RH/-40°C, said module comprising a transparent front support sheet made of glass, a back sheet, an array of photovoltaic cells disposed between said front support sheet and said back sheet, a plurality of electrical conductors extending between said cells, said electrical conductors being physically and electrically coupled to said photovoltaic cells by solder connections, and a zinc ionomer encapsulant that comprises a copolymer of ethylene-methacrylic acid or a copolymer of ethylene-acrylic acid in combination with a light absorber and light stabilizer, said zinc ionomer encapsulant extending between and bonded to said front support sheet and said back sheet and surrounding and bonded to said cells and said conductors, characterized in that an acidic flux residue is present at one or more of said solder connections, and said zinc ionomer has a melt flow index of 5.5 dg/min., a melt point of 95°C, a freeze point of 61°C, a Vicat softening point of 65°C, a density of 0.95 g/cc, an ultimate tensile strength of 5300 psi (MD) and 5100 psi (TD), a secant modulus of 35,000 psi (MD) and 34,000 (TD), and a maximum water absorption of 0.3 wt. %, and is substantially inert with respect to reaction with said acid flux residue.

43. (new) A laminated photovoltaic module according to claim 42 wherein said UV light absorber is 2-(2H-benzotriazol-2-yl)-4,6-ditertpentylphenol, and said UV light stabilizer is poly[[6-[(1, 1, 3, 3-tetramethylbutyl)amino]-1, 3, 5-triazine-2, 4-diyl] [2, 2, 6, 6-tetramethyl-4-piperidiny) imino]-1,6-hexanediyl [(2, 2, 6, 6-tetramethyl-4-piperidiny) imino]].

44. (new) A laminated photovoltaic module according to claim 43 wherein said photovoltaic cells are silicon cells.

45. (new) In a photovoltaic module comprising an array of electrically interconnected photovoltaic cells encapsulated between a transparent front support sheet made of glass and a back sheet by a light-transmitting zinc ionomer encapsulant, said photovoltaic cells being interconnected by conductors that are physically and electrically coupled to said photovoltaic cells by solder connections that have been made using an acidic flux, with acidic flux residue being present at one or more of said solder connections, and said zinc ionomer encapsulant comprising an ethylene-methacrylic acid copolymer or an ethylene-acrylic acid copolymer in combination with 0.3 to 1.0 wt. % of a UV light absorber and 0.3 to 1.0 wt. % of a UV light stabilizer,

the improvement wherein said zinc ionomer is substantially inert with respect to reaction with said acid flux residue, and has a melt flow index of 5.5 dg/min., a melt point of 95°C, a Vicat softening point of 65°C, a freeze point of 61°C, a density of 0.95 g/cc, an ultimate tensile strength of 5300 psi (MD) and 5100 psi (TD), a secant modulus of 35,000 psi (MD) and 34,000 (TD), and a maximum water absorption of 0.3 wt. %, and said UV light absorber is 2-(2H-benzotriazol-2-yl)-4,6-ditertpentylphenol and said UV light stabilizer is poly[6-[(1, 1, 3, 3-tetramethylbutyl)amino]-1, 3, 5-triazine-2, 4-diyl] [2, 2, 6, 6-tetramethyl-4-piperidiny) imino]-1,6-hexanediy [(2, 2, 6, 6-tetramethyl-4-piperidiny) imino]].

46. (new) A photovoltaic module according to claim 45 wherein the cells comprise cadmium telluride or CIGS photovoltaic cells.